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TRADITIONAL CHILDREN'S GAMES IN INDIA

Unlearning the attributes of subordination

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Abstract

One of the main tenets of subaltern studies is studying the general attribute of subordination expressed through axes such as class, caste, gender and age, to which we can add disability. How does then the disabled person write herself? This chapter shows how the western disability studies theories of inclusion can be unpacked and informed through simple notions of innovations through informality. Various traditional Indian children's games are analysed to show how they teach us ways of including the disabled child in innovative ways. The chapter identifies two conditions of postcoloniality and the ways to decolonise them through reviving and renewing the pre-colonial scene.

Keywords: Subaltern, India, tag games, hopscotch, inclusion, integration

Introduction: The ritual of re-minoritisation

If knowledge can be brought into social consciousness at least by members of the community and if it can be referred to, then it becomes shareable and therefore truly counted as knowledge; reference, as we know, presupposes naming. However, naming may not always emerge effortlessly since ideas or even events may lack a referential term. The other way for reference to emerge is by making apparent a reference point. Lack of a reference point runs the risk of undermining the existential reality (and knowledge claims) of a minority participant in a classroom, an event, a meeting or a game; the minority student, participant, member or player, never develops trust regarding the essential core of their being[1]. This is how a structural opening is created for exclusion to enter any such unequal dyad (teacher-student, organiser-participant, host-guest, captain-player). Such systemic exclusion when tempered with attitudes, ideologies and belief systems, has the potential to mould a condition of subordination, which is symptomatic also of postcolonialism. There is therefore an indirect connection between exclusion and the postcolonial condition via a culture of subordination. In the context of children's games, excluding the disabled child marks the attribute of subordination.

Modern imperialism is seen as a moral and temporal contradiction by many authors (Chatterjee 1993, Chakrabarty 2000). For example, both the Empire and Slavery are seen as the contradiction of modernity; Gandhi (2017) calls it 'the double time' of being able and willing to claim freedom and the right to subjugate at the same time. In the Empire, exclusion was built into the structure of universalism, and as Kapur (2007) points out,'(T)he purportedly universal rights of man could be denied to those not considered to be men or human,' – a certain 'civilisation maturity' (Mehta 1999) was required to make the grade. Viewed through this lens, the postcolonial excludes the disabled child similarly as someone who lacks civilisational maturity of a superior 'race'.

Nowhere is this connection more visible and relevant than a disabled child's encounter with modern games in general. There have been various studies (Renold 2004, 2017, Woods 2009) to point out how children wishing to dominate and to become popular, practice one form or other of exclusion (mostly through aggression, as pointed out in sociometric studies by Milich and Landau 1984; Rodkin *et al* 2006, among others), by pathologising any alternative

[1] Many years ago, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the university I am employed at refused to use the term 'disabled' or 'disability' in his speech at an event organized by the Equal Opportunity Cell of the university, of which I was a member and then its coordinator; by refusing to provide even a reference point, he negated the presence of the majority of the people present in the auditorium that day.

form of being, be it sexuality, caste, ability, language, economy, etc. The minority children are then re-minoritised and they continue to remain a victim of marginalising aggression and abuse. The modern forms of games in general is but one arena where this ritual is re-enacted prominently.

This chapter addresses both the theory and politics of the condition of postcoloniality through an "attribute of subordination" (Guha, 1982, p vii) reflected in the changing character of traditional children's games in India. In particular, it is shown how the inherent flexibility and inclusion in traditional children's games from pre-colonial times, changed gradually to give way to the idea of competitive sports and a new binary of the dominant–subaltern, or the able –disabled as a scourge of the colonial/ post-colonial times.

A theoretical treatment of the condition of postcoloniality involves questioning western epistemological assumptions and seeking the possibility of cultural alterity — the two features of poststructuralism. I would like to interpret these two as the 'ability to see from the other side' and the 'ability to centre the other' (Bhattacharya, forthcoming) — each aiding the other since you can only see the other side if you re-locate, that is, decentre. On the other hand, the politics of the condition of postcoloniality is informed by a materialist conception of history – a necessarily Marxist perspective. In particular, as discussed above and immediately below, by re-focussing on the other children-disabled children dyad as a specific instance of the dominant-subaltern binarity, a qualitative reinterpretation of the relation of production can be fashioned through the above specific dyad; that is, although the particular social relationship is not associated with a relation of production directly, disabled children must enter into such an unequal relation to survive their means of life.

Here, as in other situations where disability is encountered, disability studies most strongly emphasises the politics of disability – in this case, the politics of the postcolonial condition of subordination. Both disability studies and postcolonialism derive their politics broadly from Marxism. Narrowing down further and bringing under focus the topic of children's games, the relation between a disabled child and a group of children is one social relation, that contributes to the structure and character of the society qualitatively.

However, in this context – and especially in this context – as in many other such encounters, addressing only the politics of disability reveals a partial perspective, and I would say, is bound to fail. I am interested instead in the psychology of such disability encounters – the other dimension of disability. In case of the condition of subordination, we are mostly concerned with the psychological and there seems to be in fact no place for the political. Let me elaborate further.

The importance of the politics of disability is much celebrated, not just in the west but also, and more so, in the global south because it is only politics that provides a handle, a strategy for liberation. However, a condition – whether of subordination as an after effect of postcolonialism or of normality – is foremost a social phenomenon, it is not the result of a willed politic. Social is the norm, but how an individual negotiates that norm has to be necessarily psychological; thus, it involves a narrowing from the social to the psychological. A political reaction to the social (which necessarily manifests the psychological) is bound to fail. A norm affects first the individual, the institutionalisation of the norm takes place only later.

Let us understand this through a disability-relevant, documented example. Chaturvedi (2018, p.184-5) states the following:[2]

> I started walking at the age of two and a half years. My impairment impacted my body balance. I used to fall down frequently. But it was never a big deal for me to get hurt. A cut on the body would make me feel good. I took it as a marker of being a fighter or a hero.

'Falling is not a big deal' – this expression subverts the social more, the norm built by society, by parents, by teachers – 'sit straight', 'don't fall down', etc. 'Falling is not a big deal' counters that more and subverts that disciplinary regime. However, the emergence of an anxiety of falling, anxiety that emerges through correctives by parents and the society at large, is real:

> If I fall it becomes traumatic for the parents. They also get worried about injuries. Soon, I started practising falling not on the back of my head but in the front![3]

Thus, anxiety of falling down emerged in him as a child, and it is psychological; it is the psychological effect of the dominating societal norm of mobility etiquettes. A political response to such a normative is futile. Similarly, a political reaction to the internalisation of oppression and subjugation that an excluded disabled child comes to experience through the ritual of re-minoritisation, let us say, on the school football ground, is equally pointless.

[2]Chaturvedi is an India disability studies scholar with Cerebral Palsy, who is also an active member of the "Critical Disability Studies in India" (CDSI) reading group. This group was founded by me in 2010 with the explicit aim of highlighting disability knowledge, by readings and discussions. There are a couple of dedicated websites available which contain further details about the formation and activities of the group: (i) https://ijcds.wordpress.com; (ii) https://sites.google.com/view/cdsi/home.

[3] Stated by Sameer Chaturvedi at the 39th meeting of the CDSI held on 28th Oct. 2018.

The two postcolonial conditions and the ways to decolonise them

How does one then decolonise the condition of postcolonialism? That is, how does one subvert the culture of subordination? I suggest that we first recognise that there are two types of postcolonial conditions in relation to the theme of the chapter, which will be discussed in the two subsections that follow. One way of responding to postcoloniality, informed by disability studies, is through practising radical inclusion, an inclusive practice that implies an overhauling of a system (of education, of governance, etc.). Like many other scholars, this is the ideal that I have been offering as well (Bhattacharya 2010, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022). However, I would like to now state that it is a theoretical premise that suits a wealthier nation. Let us designate this form of inclusion as the 'model inclusion'; I will come back to this type of inclusion in detail a little later in the section and argue that in fact this mode of inclusion merely re-enacts the very condition that it seeks to overcome.

The first condition of postcoloniality: transformation of games

The first condition of postcoloniality that is proposed – keeping it specific to the topic under discussion (traditional Indian games) – highlights in fact what is called, the 'colonial aftermath' – '[t]he range of ambivalent cultural moods and formations which accompany periods of transition and translation' (Gandhi 1998, p.5). The aftermath in its *post*-coloniality is marked by the political urgency to reject the past and bring forth in its place a new world. However, given the experience and history of the last century, now that the intoxicating smell of gun powder has well receded, I suggest that we recognise the ever-lingering *post*- as necessarily suffused with the lingering psychological hold of the past along with the anxiety to depart from it, and the possibility of renewal and revival of the pre-colonial scene. The "ruins" of colonialism must be taken as a reminder to depart, revive and renew.

With the settlement of the colonies, the traditional games gave way to the notion of 'sports' – an arena necessarily imperative of competition, and more significantly, of winning. This predominantly Greek notion of identifying – and rewarding – the one who is the 'fastest', 'jumps the highest/ longest', 'throws something the farthest', etc., in short, the 'best' among the able, took hold of the sports arena. This has overshadowed and now completely eradicated traditional games from the arena, and along with it, the spirit of inclusion that inhered in those

games. It is no longer a lingering psychological hold of the past but rather a dominating mode of play, which in its wake has managed to wipe out all contradictions, installing in its place, the new Empire of games. I identify this as the first condition of postcoloniality – the transmogrification of games to sports.

As a way of decolonising the first condition of postcoloniality, we must re-cognise the 'pre-colonial scene' to initiate escaping the condition of subordination imposed by the first condition of postcoloniality. Re-cognition of the pre-colonial scene is followed by revival and renewal. That is, I propose that the pre-colonial scene of traditional games played by children be revived and renewed to *naturally* bring to effect inclusion of disabled children as participants. Such a revival implies that the pre-colonial or traditional games contain within their structure, the germ of inclusion.

The second condition of postcoloniality: 'model inclusion'

I will consider 'model inclusion', mentioned at the beginning of the section, as the second postcolonial condition: the acceptance of the global north mode of inclusion. A necessarily anti-colonial project would be to subvert this model inclusion, which constitutes the second way of decolonising the postcolonial condition of subordination. The purpose is to propose that integration, the much compromised and maligned concept (see Bhattacharya 2010; Oliver 1996; Rieser 2006), is not necessarily a negative option — especially, if a modified version of it can be found; in fact, this is what families and friends do – they accommodate, in other words, they integrate, they do not go out to change the world. I term this way of decolonising as 'contextual-integration'.

I designate this still as integration since it does not yet realise the grander goal of model inclusion — an overhauling of the system. However, I qualify this form of integration as somewhere between mere retrofitting and model inclusion. That is, it is suggested that model inclusion may remain as our distant goal but our immediate response be better than retrofitting (or what is known as geographic integration). Contextual-integration brings on an expansion of the boundary that then includes the other by leaving a space for mutual interaction whereby a transformative alteration can be bought about by enriching each other. This interactive space is a space for evolving and acts as an impetus to become a part of a unified and transformed whole (and not remain segregated, as in geographic segregation) that is at the same time transitory and dynamic; this formative, unified whole is ever evolving as a result of constant

interaction with the non-centric and it redefines itself continuously. This emerging process can be called 'innovation through informality'. In this way, we can imagine a system, a structure, where accommodation is automatic, you do not have to *do* it, it has the structural flexibility of accommodating, of integrating, naturally, that is, its flexibility is built-in, naturally. Traditional Indian games are exactly that, like many other indigenous or aboriginal games; they have enough flexibility to let everyone have a go.

Such a system of games therefore is a more advanced system, not only is it anti-colonial in its stance (by embracing integration rather than performing the radical, ethos-altering, overhauling that comes with the northern theory of 'model inclusion') yet the flexibility that derives true inclusion is built in. I would additionally claim another point in favour of this approach: it is also more economical to the extent that it is more sustainable over a longer period for any economy.

Contextual-integration

As indicated earlier, I have been advocating for a deeper philosophy of inclusion, based on the idea of centring (see Bhattacharya 2014, 2021, 2022, forthcoming, for details), and for finding the right character and spirit of inclusion within disability I have been arguing against integration as a primary requirement (Bhattacharya 2010), like many other scholars (Oliver 1996; Rieser 2006). The essential idea in such a proposal that captures the soul of the concept of inclusion is that it involves ushering in a radical overhauling of the system rather than trying to retrofit or fitting in. Centring is that philosophical notion that epitomises both the procedure and process of bringing about inclusion. A shifting of the centre of knowledge production, or the epistemic centre, has been the theme of my work on inclusion for the last decade, it encapsulates the philosophy of De/centring knowledge that I propose. However, it is not easy to decentre knowledge, dominated as it is by centuries of practices and conventions. I have proposed before (Bhattacharya 2021) that there maybe three ways of decentring, namely through empathy, by rights, and by questioning normativity. By questioning normativity from the perspective of a Dalit, religious, linguistic, gender, economic, or disabled minority, a transformative change can be brought about. A forging of multiple sectorial challenges, continuously moulding the centre of knowledge production and thereby changing it, will afford a radical transformation of education delivery and reception (Bhattacharya 2022). In Bhattacharya (2021), it is shown how the word difference when written as **DiF**f̲e**R***enc*E,

symbolically encompasses the philosophy with every letter carrying a different font, capitalisation scheme, and style. This philosophy opposes the established, state-sponsored education systems geared towards levelling out any difference, since homogeneity is considered to be the norm in such systems. The central mechanism of De/centring is a process of continuous displacement of the centre of knowledge making.

Here, I would like to go back to the idea of integration and examine it in the context of the social system of an economically weaker state, like most of the global south and maybe even some nations in the global north. Such a contextualised revisit will constitute a new proposal in favour of integration, to be denoted as 'contextual-integration', qualified as above being different from retrofitting or other kinds of integrational practices like periodic, social or geographic integration.

Consider a common event in our day-to-day life. One of the commonly observed aging effect that we tend to encounter often is how many older people temporarily fail to recollect location of everyday objects in the house, especially if the house is full of things and is of a more than a minimal built area. The possibility of putting an e-tag on every object and then including the code in a system in a phone, would be a plausible way of locating such 'missing' objects — all that one has to do is to really press the right button and the object being searched will emit a sound (or light, for that matter) to make it easier for it to be located. If not already existing, such a system of codification of daily-use objects is within the realm of possibility.

Then related to this, think of a similar situation of searching for an object in case of a person with Alzheimer's condition. As we have seen in many films, family members or close friends try to help the person by manually tagging every little object that a person may need inside a household. If we think about this for a moment the first thing that strikes us is an attempt on the part of the family member or friend to fit in the disabled person rather than trying anything grander like changing the overall system. However, if I am a devotee of radical inclusion believing in overhauling a system rather than fitting in and as per my own philosophy of centring that advocates organising a world around the marginal, the weak, the neglected, the minority, I would rather favour a world where a person with Alzheimer's will not have any reason to look for something, everything that she or he needs will be visible. I would therefore argue for a way of living and a design of our surroundings in such a manner, so that looking for something and forgetting where it has been kept become non-issues; once we remove the cause we no longer have the effect, that is, the disability.

If we think through and document efforts made by family members, close friends and even society at large, to accommodate a disabled person, they have all been efforts towards

integration because they want to fit the person in (and more) and that is the only way they can help the person and his or her disability – they do not go around radically changing the system. Integration thus also arises from the desire to be helpful without any malice or of doing only the minimal, as we often accuse institutions, governments and establishments in general to be involved in when the minimal is done to achieve their duties by fulfilling a certain criterion in a policy document or by simply ticking a box.

Traditional Indian games played by children are also an effort to include the disabled child by contextually integrating, making short adjustments in rules, and thereby including the disabled child. Such games provide opportunities to participate non-competitively for all involved, and not simply the one with the ball or the bat, for example. Contextual-integration therefore is structurally built in traditional games as opposed to competitive games (which I am calling more appropriately here as sports) that are the norm now. Given the theme of the chapter, let us see this through traditional Indian children's games.

Traditional Indian games

Participation in indigenous games is about 'participating in a cooperative activity' (Louth and Jamieson-Proctor, 2018), discussing Australian aboriginal indigenous games), as historically such games emerged as reflecting kinship in a community that values cooperation rather than competition. Many such games promote cooperation to achieve a collective goal (Edwards 2009). For example, 'tag' games of various communities and cultures is also about passing on responsibilities collectively by designating the next in the kin, so to speak. As the games evolved in the modern times, winning as an achievement emerged but it never became the defining character of such traditional games – Indian or aboriginal.

The above studies look at indigenous games from their value in promoting physical self-efficacy (Louth and Jamieson-Proctor 2018), positive experience of participating (Thompson *et al* 2014), and health-related quality of life (Trajkovik *et al* 2018). Barring some scientific studies from the medical perspective (Lorenz n.d. on games as a therapy), there have been no studies connecting traditional games and disability. Similarly, within the Indian context, barring a recent medical study (Rahman *et al* 2020), showing how traditional Indian games increase functional abilities like gross motor functions, fine motor skills, cognitive functions, communication and other functions, in children with neurodevelopmental disabilities, there has been no work looking at Indian traditional games from the perspective of

disability. As far as I could find out there has certainly been no attempt to look at these games within the Indian context from the disability studies perspective. My interest in games arose from Chaturvedi (2018), which is a life-story of the author's disability (cerebral palsy) in the narrative form. The following quote from the article captures the author's encounter with traditional Indian games:

> Kids enjoy playing games like Pakran Pakrai, Lagripala (both variations of the game Tag) Chupan–Chupai (hide and seek), Khokho and Uuch–Nich; these would be games requiring a certain amount of 'physical fitness' and normality for participation. However, I was included in playing most of them. More than my participation, I enjoyed seeing my co-participants, who could run faster than me. (Chaturvedi 2018, p.184)

I will discuss some these games to show how many of the traditional children's games may seem obviously biased on surface, including some of their names, they are not in fact so. For example, *Langṛi-ṭang* is "crippled-leg", where the chaser/ seeker has to hop on one leg throughout their turn and be able to touch (or tag) as many of the opponents as possible within a designated square marked on the ground with chalk. *Lagṛipala* (see immediately below), which can be translated as "crippled-turn" in case the spelling is a variation of *Langṛi-pala*, is a hopscotch game; there is a variation of *Stapoo* where having completed all the squares, a player can take their turn from the topmost square by throwing a stone (or a bottle cap) "blindly" onto a square behind them. Similarly, the name of another game, *Unch-neech* "Up-down" (though see later for a different interpretation), is mildly biased in its implication of a hierarchy and also in the way it is played, by jumping up or down to a high or low level, making it heavily biased against children with mobility-related disabilities. Similarly, the names like *Pakṛam-pakṛai* (chasing), *Chupam-chupai* (hide-and-seek), *Aankh-micholi* (blindfolded hide-and-seek), are also biased by their interpretive implications, which favour a visual and mobile culture (chasing, seeking, seeking blindfolded).

When it comes to types, there are several English games that are classified under the type 'Blindfolded games' such as Blind Bell, Blindman's Buff, Blindman's Stan, Buff, Cock Stride, Dinah, French Blindman's Buff, Giddy, Hot Cockles, Kick the Block, Muffin Man, Old Johnny Hairy, Crap in!, 'Ot millo, Pillie Winkie, Pointing out a Point, Queen of Sheba (Gomme, 1898, p.467).

Inclusion through 'safe zones'

Discussing some of the games further while reading Chaturvedi (2018) with others in a meeting at CDSI[4], it turned out that *Lagṛipala* (pala is turn) in the text is the same as what is called *Stapoo* (origin unknown) in north India, especially in Delhi;[5] it is also same as hopscotch, known the world over including the global north. However, the number of squares may differ from region to region. This game is also called simply *Langṛi* "crippled" in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Though it is not a specifically team sport, a mobility disabled child is often included by bending the rules to some extent. Similarly, a blind child would be included by voicing the exact location of the stone or bottle cap. It would also require creating the lines on the ground not simply by marking them with chalk but either through a raised material (like a rope) or by digging out the soil to indicate the boundary lines of each square.

Chasing games (as all tag games are) generally assume a normative that excludes weaker and disabled children. For example, Brewster (1951, p.239) introduces Indian tag games as follows:

> There is in such games a challenge not only to the pursuer's fleetness of foot and to the quickness of his muscular reflexes but also to the rapidity of his mental reactions in the anticipating of his quarry's next move.

However, many of these games have in built in them the component of safe versus unsafe places. This component, an integral part of traditional games as opposed to sports as we know them today, defined largely through the Greek notion of identifying one person as the strongest, allows for the possibility of inclusion through integration. Brewster (1951) mentions a game called *Uṭhali* "Getting up", which involves escaping from a chaser by running, as in many other such chasing/ tagging games. However, it allows for the possibility of tired or slow runners to

[4] 39th meeting of the CDSI held on 28th Oct. 2018 (see also Note 3). The participants whose opinions I will refer to in this chapter were Abhishek Thakur (AT), Sameer Chaturvedi (SC), Sharmishthaa Atreja (SA), Vageshwari Atreja (VA) and Yogesh Yadav (YY), who will be henceforth identified by their initials. All the members are disability studies scholars at the universities (PhD scholars and/or Assistant Professors).

[5] There is another similar sounding game called *Lagoṛi*, which goes by the name *Pitthu* in north India; it is played between two teams of varying size involving seven small piled-up stones and a rubber ball. However, it is not a tag game and is not hopscotch. As per my conversation with Chaturvedi, *Lagṛipala* in the text does indeed indicate hopscotch. More information about *Piṭṭhu* or *Lagoṛi* can be obtained at: https://www.traditionalgames.in/seven-stones.

sit down to escape the chaser, and can get up and run again only when such a player is tapped on the shoulder by a team member with the utterance "*Uṭhali*".

Similarly, in one of the 19th C. English games played by children called "Tricky Touchwood", if a player called out "a barla" when being chased, they are exempt from being tagged, though the player thus exempted would have to remain stationary in the position they called out, and can run again after calling "Ma barla oot" (see, Gomme, 1898, p.292). Likewise, an American tag game called *Hang Tag* allowed safety zones if both feet of a player are in the air, that is, when s/he is able to hang from a pole or tree, which Brewster (1951) identifies as equivalent to the Indian game of *Limbdi-Pipali* "Neem and Peepal" that allows escape from chasers by climbing up these trees.

In fact, the so-called hierarchical bias pointed out earlier in the name *Uunch-Neech* "Up-down" (or "High-low") in fact indicates availability of safe zones (high or low ground) surface/for any player, and especially for disabled child. The full form of the game is *Uunch-Neech ka Papṛa*, where *Papṛa* may denote a tree whose dry bark in the form of a log or plank may denote up and down of the levels required to play the game. This too is a chasing game where one person (the pursuer, chaser) called the *denner*, is asked *Uunch mangii neech?* "Do you want high or low?", and as per their wish, the other children have to make sure to escape from the level demanded by the *denner*. This is a term which may be conjectured to be of an Anglo-Indian origin, though not discussed or listed anywhere. The term itself may have been derived from the English word *den* which is also used in the games sense to denote the location or place where the chaser (sometimes called "It" in the western tradition) is stationed. A *denner* from that point of view will be player who is destined to the *den*. The chaser is usually chosen by lot through a counting out rhyme — the one who is left out in the rhyme is designated thus. Gomme (1898, p.473) states the following in this connection:

> It is possible that the game of *Touch* has developed from the practice of choosing a victim by lot, or from tabooing people suffering from certain diseases or subjected to some special punishment.

If so, being a *denner* marks a player out in some manner; as is the norm in all such games the *denner* is able to pass on their status by touching or tagging another player so that the original chaser's un-tabooed personality is restored and the newly tagged person becomes the marked out one. Although a disability-centric reading of this rule would indicate the tabooed player as the weaker or disabled person, it is in fact never the case that a disabled person is marked out

in these traditional games. Rather, s/he is included in innovative and informal ways, some of which are expressed clearly during the CDSI meeting by all (non-)disabled members of the group.

For example, SC recounted how he would always be included in these games in the neighbourhood in informal ways. In case of *Uunch-Neech*, he pointed out that a particular place is identified as *kacchi-miṭṭi*, the word *kacchi* literally meaning 'raw' but here more appropriately, 'yet to be developed'; the expression therefore meaning 'under-developed soil', which is designated as the area for a 'weaker' or younger or disabled child, and the *denner* is not allowed into that area to tag, that is, the disabled child is exempted from being tagged. Note that the possibility of designating a place for the disabled player arises due to the fact that these games have a built-in concept of a safety zone (see above).

Inclusion through innovation

Another very popular chasing game children still play in neighbourhoods is called *Pakḍam-Pakḍai*, which can be roughly translated as "to catch-and-catching". According to YY, when blind children in a school for the blind that he went to played this game, it involved all participants running, making loud noises throughout and not keeping silent at all, which served the purpose of letting other participants know who needs to run in which direction. Thus, noise or sound was an essential, innovative part of the game when played by blind children. AT also mentioned another version of the game which is played inside the classroom when a teacher is absent where children do not make noise but hide at different corners of the room, including behind the teacher's desk and chair. As YY pointed out, such a silent version can be possible only in a confined space and over a period of time, the players become aware of the infrastructure of the classroom to be able to easily navigate through the rows of desks and other furniture. According to both of them, an essential extended rule of that game was necessitated when a blind player is included involved, namely, that the players with vision were required to make sounds while hiding or running.

Similarly, when hide-and-seek games like *Chhupam-Chhupai* or the blindfolded version, *Aankh-Micholi*, were played, including a blind child meant the component of noise to be made essential; including a locomotor-disabled child on the other hand would require the counting by the seeker to go on slower than usual and perhaps continue to a larger number so that the particular child gets a longer head-start. Regarding these games, the development of

the sense of sound (and touch, since these are tag games as well) was encouraged, as pointed out by YY, and VA; as mentioned by SA, this is also the case in another well-known Indian tag game called *Kho-Kho* (sound produced by players while playing) which would require the players sitting to make noise by clapping.

Conclusions

This chapter traced the near death of traditional Indian games to the persisting effects of postcolonialism. In particular, the chapter has identified two conditions of postcoloniality and suggested two different ways out of those conditions. The chapter starts with an Introduction demonstrating that exclusion is a major product of postcolonialism. Similarly, modern games are exclusionary by way of exercising domination and power through aggression, and as a result, the minority child is re-minoritised in such games. In this connection, the chapter further proposes that the psychology rather than the politics of a social norm like exclusion (re-minoritisation being a form) must be attended to.

In the section, 'The two postcolonial conditions and the ways to decolonise them' it is suggested that the two conditions be identified as 'transformation of games to sports' and the 'model inclusion'. The two ways of decolonising these two conditions are suggested to be 'revival and renewal of the pre-colonial scene' and 'contextual-integration', respectively, the latter arguing against the ethos-altering concept of 'model inclusion'. Both these ways out of the conditions of subordination highlight the structurally integral feature of inclusion that is inherent in traditional Indian children's games.

The section, 'Traditional India games' shows that past work in both the global north and south have failed to address the importance of these games from a disability studies perspective. This section discusses in two subjections the two ways in which traditional Indian games imbue inclusion: (i) inclusion through the concept of 'safe zones', and (ii) inclusion through innovation. This is done via a few traditional Indian games like, *Langṛi-(ṭang)* (*=Stapoo/ Lagṛpala*), *Uunch-neech ka papḍa*, *Pakḍam-Pakḍai*, *Chhupam-chhupai* and *Aankh-Micholi*.

Reflective Questions

1. How do the two pillars of postcolonialism, namely, poststructuralism and Marxism relate to the issue of disability?
2. What are the postcolonial conditions of traditional Indian children's games and how to decolonise them in the context of disability?
3. How do we rethink the western concept of inclusion from the point of view of the global south and sustainability?
4. How do traditional Indian children's games have built-in notions of inclusion?

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